

Birds Eating the Fleshy Outer Coat of Zamia Seeds.—During their time of fruiting one often finds the showy red-coated seeds of the zamia (*Macrozamia Roidlei*) pulled out of the cones and scattered about, some of them with the fleshy outer layer partly or completely eaten off. Divested of their outer covering, numbers of the seeds are found also where they have been left lying on the tops of stumps and logs. Formerly I had thought that this was exclusively the work of one or more of our small native animals, but recent observations have revealed that some birds include the coat of these seeds in their diet, and that one species at any rate carries them about.

In June 1951 Mr. W. Smith, of "Aldersyde," Bickley, told me it had given him some pleasure to discover one of the channels by which the cleaned seeds reach the situations mentioned, when he observed a Raven (*Corvus coronoides*) eating the flesh from one on the top of a stump. The bird was holding the seed down in its foot, and carried it off in its bill when disturbed.

Mention of this by Mr. Smith led to a watch being kept, Mr. and Mrs. G. F. Parton in particular giving close attention in this respect to the birds about their home, where many zamia palms were fruiting. Corroborative evidence was soon obtained in regard to the Raven. In addition it was found that numbers of Silver-eyes (*Zosterops australasiae*) were knocking round the spilled seeds and greedily eating the layer of flesh. Many pieces of red skin from which the flesh had been cleaned were invariably found where these had been feeding. Subsequently Mr. Parton found that a small band of Western Rosellas (*Platycercus icterotis*) were also regularly feeding on the outer layer of the seeds.

One wonders if the Squeaker or Grey Bell-Magpie (*Strepera versicolor*) does not also avail itself of this source of food supply.

—W. H. LOARING, Bickley.

Letter-winged Kite Recorded for Western Australia.—Owing to the absence of positive records from Western Australia, Major Whittell and I excluded the Letter-winged Kite (*Elanus scriptus*) from a formal place in our *Handbook of the Birds of Western Australia*, and the species was believed to be restricted to the inner arid regions of central and eastern Australia. However during a recent visit to the North-west I was surprised to observe this beautiful hawk on two separate occasions and subsequently received a specimen from a third locality.

On October 28, 1951 I saw an individual at the homestead of Hooley Station, north of the Fortescue River. It was instantly recognisable by the black under wing band extending from the body around the bend of the wing. The upper parts of the body were darker than in the Black-shouldered Kite (*E. notatus*). On October 31 I saw another Letter-winged Kite right in the town of Roebourne, where it perched on a telegraph pole.

Mr. Roy Parsons, of Coolawanyah Station, on the Fortescue, undertook to obtain a specimen for me, if an opportunity pre-